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9 June 1954

## THE DETERIORATING SITUATION IN SYRIA

### I. Government's Ineffectiveness:

- A. Weak coalition, caretaker cabinet;  
unable set election date.
- B. Major political parties, though still  
in cabinet, pulling apart.

### II. Possibility of a Coup as Result of Governmental Weakness:

#### A. Threat of leftist-military coup:

- 1. Comes from radical socialist Akram  
Hawrani and military partisans:  
allegedly 300-400 army officers out  
of estimated 2000.

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- 2. [REDACTED] says will attempt  
coup before elections.

#### B. Threat of straight military coup.

- 1. Because of army dissatisfaction with  
civilian control.

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2. Possible rebels: popular, influential  
assistant chief of staff Malki;  
hot-headed young Captain Hamdun,  
armored brigade commander Amin Abu  
Assaf.

III. Outlook:

- A. Immediate successful coup possible but  
not probable.
- B. More likely, the situation will continue  
to deteriorate, increasing probability  
of a coup.

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